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Deputy Majority Leader  
Demetrios Giannaros  
State Representative

If you need a copy of any of the  
following 2006 reports, please call me  
at 860-240-8585.



- Major Public Acts
- Acts Affecting Police
- Acts Affecting Business
- Acts Affecting Seniors
- Acts Affecting Children
- Acts Affecting Land Use
- Acts Affecting Veterans
- Acts Affecting Education
- Acts Affecting Insurance
- Acts Affecting Environment
- Acts Affecting Firefighters
- Acts Affecting Municipalities
- Acts Affecting Health Professions
- Acts Affecting Long Island Sound Since 2004
- Acts Affecting Emergency Medical Services and Personnel



Capitol News

STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
**DEMETRIOS  
GIANNAROS**  
Deputy Majority Leader  
21<sup>st</sup> District - Farmington  
Summer 2006

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Our responsibility at the legislature is to develop policy and write laws that benefit our constituents and our state. I appreciate the opportunity to update you on major issues at the State Capitol during this year's session.



I hear from many of you and your input is much appreciated. Together we can make a difference, not only for our district, but for all the people of Connecticut. In this newsletter, you will find summaries of some of the most significant actions of the Connecticut General Assembly in 2006. Please contact me if you need further information.

Thank you for the privilege of serving you!

Best Wishes,

*Demetrios*

Demetrios Giannaros  
State Representative

## State Grants Increase Again

During this budget year, we were able to increase state aid to municipalities.

Farmington has fared well with a **5.1% increase in state grants for 2006-07**. This includes increases for Education, Town Aid for Roads and Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT grants) for in-town state owned property.

### Total Estimated Annual State Grants

2006-2007	\$5,700,936
2005-2006	\$5,425,864

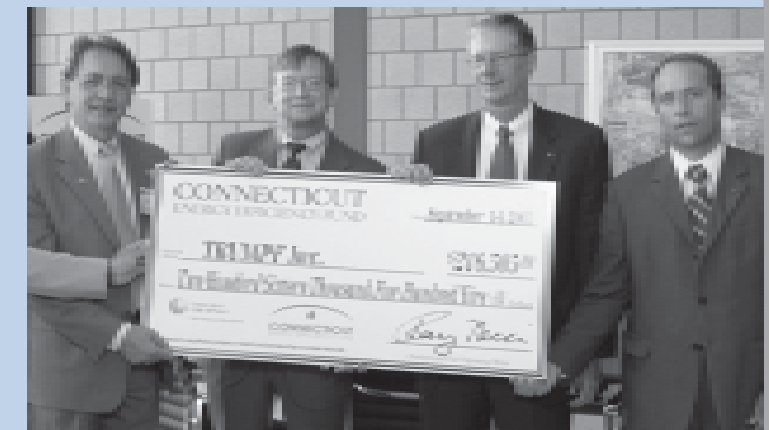
An increase of **\$275,072 (+ 5.1%)**

Source: Alan Shepard, Office of Fiscal Analysis

## Tax Relief, Business and Job Growth Incentives

- ✓ We **reduced the property tax burden** by increasing the amount of property tax payments that can be deducted from your income taxes. The maximum property tax credit will be \$500 effective July 1, 2007.
- ✓ We will now allow taxpayers a **deduction of up to \$10,000 from taxable income for contributions made to CT college savings plans**, known as CHET. This helps families with the ever increasing costs of college.
- ✓ We **eliminated the 15% business surcharge** on corporate profits.
- ✓ We are **phasing out the manufacturing equipment property tax** to assist Connecticut manufacturers in creating more jobs.
- ✓ We are providing **targeted tax credits** to assist in developing our new film and media industry.

- ✓ We have **increased the state's Rainy Day Fund to about \$1 billion** to cover possible future budget deficits.
- ✓ We are **paying down outstanding bond debt** that will free up funds for other investments in the future.



Rep. Giannaros presenting grant for energy innovation to officials of Trumpf Inc.



Gov. M. Jodi Rell with Rep. D. Giannaros at Unionville grant announcement.

## My efforts assisted in securing millions of dollars in State Bonding Grants for our town.

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- Tunxis Community College received \$34.4 million for renovations, a new library and a new classroom building that will be the envy of community colleges.
- \$500,000 was granted for improvements and redevelopment of Unionville Center.
- An additional \$1,000,000 in state bond grants passed the legislature and are pending the Governor's approval for other Farmington/Unionville projects in 2007.

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## Education Initiatives

### Fully Funding Teacher's Pensions for 2007-08

We invested in the future by **fully funding the state's Teachers' Retirement Fund for the biennium** – a net increase of \$250 million over the regular annual payments. I co-sponsored this legislation that takes seriously our commitment to those professionals who educate our children. *PA 06-186*

### 2020 Vision for Connecticut's Children

We enacted a law that emphasizes crisis prevention and reduction of poverty for our children. State dollars spent on children will be redirected from crisis services to preventative programs for children. More funds will be spent on time-tested crisis prevention programs — early education, school readiness, after school programs, healthcare and immunization, and vocational training. In addition, we strengthened the HUSKY health coverage program. Under HUSKY A, our children receive all necessary screening, diagnostic services and treatment. *PA 06-179*



*Rep. Giannaros with students at CT Invention Convention.*

### Healthy Food & Beverages in Schools

To address the escalating problem of childhood health problems, we passed the Healthy Schools Initiative. It reinforces healthy eating habits at schools. The toughest law in the nation, it bans the sale of soda and sugary beverages and creates incentives for schools to offer healthy food, drinks and snacks and establishes nutritional standards for food sold to students. *PA 06-03*

### UConn 2000 Construction Reform

In order to correct past mistakes, we voted to reform management and construction practices and to improve the oversight and accountability of future construction and maintenance programs. The legislation establishes an independent professional Oversight Committee to supervise construction procedures, code compliance and review of contracts; and a Construction Assurance Office to review construction performance. These, along with a strengthened auditing process, will improve efficiency and reduce mistakes. *PA 06-134*

# Rep. Giannaros' Capitol News

### Hospital Acquired Infections

In response to public concerns, the General Assembly formed a Committee on Healthcare Associated Infections. This committee will advise the Department of Public Health on developing a mandatory reporting system for hospital associated infections. This increases patient safety in hospitals by holding hospitals accountable for the spread of disease. *PA 06-142*

### Detecting Breast Cancer

Insurance companies will now be required to cover the cost of ultrasound screening for any woman who has dense breast tissue or is considered to be at increased risk for breast cancer due to family history or prior breast cancer. *PA 06-38*



*Rep. Giannaros with New Horizon residents and Gov. Rell, at grant announcement in Farmington.*

### Physical Therapist Access

Patients now may see a physical therapist without a referral from another health care professional. Physical therapists must meet specific criteria. Workers' compensation injuries and specific kinds of spinal manipulation must have physician referrals. *PA 06-125*

### Radiology Imaging Services

Patient co-pays for MRIs and CAT scans will now be limited to \$375 a year for such tests and \$75 for each test. A patient's limit is \$400 for all PET (positron emission topography) in a year and \$100 for each one. The caps apply only when services are performed in a facility in your health network. Caps do not apply to consumers whose employers' health plans are self-insured. *PA 06-180*

### Encroachment on Open Space Lands

Open space is preserved in order to safeguard Connecticut's rural heritage from development and despoilment. This bill protects the noble intention established under the land trust by authorizing anyone with property interest to bring action against the violator. *PA 06-89*

### Clean Cars

In an effort to curb the harmful rise of noxious greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, this bill implements a GHG labeling program for new vehicles sold or leased for the 2009 model year and later. The Department of Environmental Protection commissioner must create a comparative GHG labeling program. The bill prohibits the sale or lease of a 2009 or later model year motor vehicle without a GHG emissions label. *PA 06-161*

### Ethics and Campaign Finance Reform

We closed multiple loopholes in both areas. This resulted in clarifying and strengthening enforcement provisions. *PA 06-137*

### Enhanced Megan's Law

- ✓ Increase the number of probation and parole officers who monitor sex offenders and require registration before release.
- ✓ Improve the on-line registry by including the sex offender's most recent photo, contact information for a sex offender's parole and probation officers, and an improved description of the offense.
- ✓ Create a Risk Assessment Team which will review the files of all offenders, identify the risk posed and make recommendations to further protect the public from the offender.
- ✓ Provide increased funding for the evaluation and treatment of abused children in an effort to minimize secondary trauma and successfully prosecute sex offenders. *PA 06-187*

## PROTECTING CONSUMERS

### Laws passed protect Connecticut citizens from consumer fraud and identity theft.

- Protect consumers from having their telephone records sold, obtained or received without consent. *PA 06-96*
- Make it illegal to obtain the information on the electronic strip of a credit card or transfer that information to another card without owner's consent. *PA 06-60*
- Make it illegal to send e-mail messages with the intent to solicit information such as Social Security numbers or bank account information by pretending to be an on-line business. This makes "phishing" illegal. *PA 06-50*
- Require home heating fuel suppliers to fully disclose, in writing, all of the purchaser's costs. *PA 06-65*

**Telemarketers "Do Not Call" 1-888-382-1222**

## Seniors & Veterans

### Worker's Compensation Benefits

Workers over the age of 65, injured on the job, will no longer have their Social Security retirement payment deducted from their workers' compensation benefit. This offset was harmful to a large population of senior citizens who are in the workplace because Social Security benefits are insufficient to sustain a living. *PA 06-84*

### Elderly Nutrition

Given growing concern over federal cutbacks to various elderly nutrition programs, the legislature added \$800,000 to continue current levels of meal programs for homebound seniors. *PA 06-186*



*Rep. Giannaros with Mr. Minges on Memorial Day.*

### Property Tax Relief

Towns will now have the option to freeze property taxes paid by senior citizens (70 or older) and their surviving spouses who have lived in the state for at least one year. Senior homeowners must meet certain income limits and this law allows the towns to also set asset limits for eligibility. This will help our seniors stay in their homes as taxes increase. *PA 06-176*

### Homemaker Companion Agency Registration

This legislation will help our seniors get the care they need while feeling safe in their homes. Homemaker companion agencies will now be required to register annually with the Department of Consumer Protection and their employees must undergo comprehensive background checks and answer questions in writing about their past. These agencies are now required to provide their clients with detailed, written individualized contracts or service plans. Violators will face penalties if they fail to do so or if they make misrepresentations. *PA 06-187*

### Disabled Veterans' Tax Exemption

This law excludes veterans' disability payments when determining income for purposes of income-based property tax exemptions for veterans, the blind, and people with total disabilities. It also requires towns to give a \$1,000 property tax exemption to people who are totally disabled and people who are blind. *PA 06-153*